

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-8 are currently pending.

Please Cancel Claims 1, 5, 6 and 8.

Please amend Claim 2, Claim 3, Claim 4 and Claim 7 as indicated.

Claim 1 (cancelled).

Claim 2 (currently amended). A binder for making an investment casting mold comprising a mixture of colloidal silicas, wherein the colloidal silicas have average particle size diameters of 4, 8 and 13 nanometers and ~~The binder of claim 1~~ wherein the 4 nanometer colloidal silica is present in the mixture in an amount of about 20% to about 70% by weight, the 8 nanometer colloidal silica is present in the mixture in an amount of about 10% to about 40% by weight and the 13 nanometer colloidal silica is present in the mixture in an amount of about 10% to about 40% by weight.

Claim 3 (currently amended). A binder for making an investment casting mold comprising a mixture of colloidal silicas, wherein the colloidal silicas have average particle size diameters of 4, 8 and 13 nanometers and ~~The binder of claim 1~~ wherein the 4 nanometer colloidal silica is present in the mixture in an amount of about 44% by weight, the 8 nanometer colloidal silica is present in the mixture in an amount of about 28% by weight and the 13 nanometer colloidal silica is present in the mixture in an amount of about 28% by weight.

Claim 4 (currently amended). ~~The binder of claim 1~~ A binder for making an investment casting mold comprising a mixture of colloidal silicas, wherein the colloidal silicas have average particle size diameters of 4, 8 and 13 nanometers, wherein the 4 nanometer colloidal silica is present in the mixture in an amount of about 20% to about 70% by weight, the 8 nanometer colloidal silica is present in the mixture in an amount of about 10% to about 40% by weight and the

13 nanometer colloidal silica is present in the mixture in an amount of about 10% to about 40% by weight, further comprising at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of latex polymers, water-soluble polymers and mixtures thereof.

Claim 5 (cancelled).

Claim 6 (cancelled).

Claim 7 (currently amended). A binder for making an investment casting mold comprising a mixture of colloidal silicas, wherein the colloidal silicas have average particle size diameters of 4, 8 and 13 nanometers and wherein the 4 nanometer colloidal silica is present in the mixture in an amount of about 44% by weight, the 8 nanometer colloidal silica is present in the mixture in an amount of about 28% by weight and the 13 nanometer colloidal silica is present in the mixture in an amount of about 28% by weight, further comprising at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of latex polymers, water-soluble polymers and mixtures thereof.~~The colloidal silica binder of claim 6 wherein the average diameter of the silica particles is in the range of about 5.5nm to 8.5nm.~~

Claim 8 (cancelled).